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ABSTRACT

This study explores leisure attitudes within the family, specifically addressing itself to three primary questions: (1) Will leisure attitudes of children be "at the same level" as those of their parents?; (2) Will the children's attitudes relate significantly to their parent's attitudes?; and (3) Will the answers to these questions be the same for different kinds of leisure attitudes? Subjects were students and their mothers and fathers, 59 sets at The City College of New York and 99 sets at Lehigh University. Questionnaire data were obtained, using Neulinger's "A Study of Leisure." Analyses indicated attitude-specific findings, a sex-related "generation gap" in some leisure attitudes, and relative independence of child-parent relationships. While the cross-sectional nature of the study did not allow a separation of "cohort-effects" from age effects, the data are supportive of a historical interpretation of the findings. Support for this explanation is provided by significant college-related attitude differences. (Author)

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Within Family Leisure Attitude Similarities and Differences

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SUMMARY

Leisure attitudes were explored within the family, in terms of three questions: will leisure attitudes of children be "at the same level" as those of their parents? Will the children's attitudes relate significantly to their parents' attitudes? Will the answers to these questions be the same for different kinds of leisure attitudes? Subjects were students and their mothers and fathers, 59 sets at The City College of New York and 99 sets at Lehigh University. Questionnaire data were obtained, using Neulinger's "A Study of Leisure." Analyses indicated attitude-specific findings, a sex-related "generation gap" in some leisure attitudes, and relative independence of child-parent relationships. While the cross-sectional nature of the study did not allow a separation of "cohort effects" from age effects, the data are supportive of a historical interpretation of the findings. Support for this explanation is provided by significant college-related attitude differences.

Within Family Leisure Attitude Similarities and Differences

Parents are generally recognized as the primary agents of socialization (e.g., Proshansky, 1966). This could lead one to expect a parent-child similarity of attitudes; however, the opposite has been theorized as well (e.g., Feuer, 1969). According to such a psychoanalytic view an irrational rebellion against the parent's authority could lead, at least temporarily, to attitudes that are the reverse of those of the parents. In addition, a parent-child attitude difference, sometimes referred to as a "generation gap," may reflect developmental as well as historical factors, or what Margaret Mead calls "cultural discontinuity" (Mead, 1970).

The present study examined leisure attitudes of two generations. While parental influence on leisure behavior has been examined (e.g., Burch, 1969; Sofranko and Nolan, 1972), "the general impression left by a survey of available literature is that only hints about socialization toward leisure are to be found" (Kelly, 1974). Our cross-sectional data do not allow us to separate year of birth or "cohort effects" (Kimmel, 1974) from age effects. We are, however, able to investigate whether a generation gap relates to specific leisure attitudes only, and whether such differences vary as a function of background characteristics of the respondents. The data also permit an examination of parental similarities of leisure attitudes and their effect on the leisure attitude of the child.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were students and their mothers and fathers, 59 sets at The City College of New York (CCNY) and 99 sets at Lehigh University (LU). Background characteristics are presented in table 1. A larger proportion of LU students than CCNY students are male; the proportion of Jewish subjects is higher at CCNY than LU; most LU subjects are United States born, while about one third of CCNY parents are foreign born. The income

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Insert Table 1 about here

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level of LU parents is considerably higher than that of CCNY parents; nearly three quarters of LU parents report incomes of $20,000 or over, against about a quarter of CCNY parents.

Questionnaire

A modified form of "A Study of Leisure" (Neulinger, 1974) was used, from which the following four leisure attitude dimensions may be derived: Affinity for leisure (I), Society's role in leisure planning (II), Self-definition through leisure or work (III), and Amount of work or vacation desired (V). The questionnaire also collects background information. In addition, subjects were asked to list free time activities that they would like to do, and the degree to which they liked these. Identical forms were used for students, mothers, and fathers.

Procedure

Data were collected from volunteer students and their parents during 1974 at CCNY, and during the Spring, 1975 at LU. Data analyses were carried out at CCNY. The present paper restricts itself to findings related to the leisure attitude dimensions. Analyses of choice of free time activities and further in depth analyses of within family relationships will be reported in a future article.

Results

The four leisure attitude scores of all subjects were subjected to three-way analyses of variance (Table 2). While the prime interest of this study lies in within family relationships (F), let us first look at the other two main effects. "Sex of student: male" (S) refers to all subjects who are either male students or parents of male students (both mothers and fathers); "sex of student: female" refers to all subjects who are either female or parents of female students (both mother and fathers). This variable thus does not represent sex, per se, but a mixture of differences between male and female students, and differences between the parents of male and female students. Since these two sources of variance are confounded here, we shall postpone a discussion of sex differences until we get to the interaction analyses where these effects can be separated.

Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here

Our findings show that subjects at the two colleges have quite different leisure attitudes. LU subjects express less affinity for leisure (I, $p < .013$), and are more work oriented (V, $p < .001$; Table 3). They are less likely to define themselves through leisure (III, $p < .012$), and they are less likely to be in favor of giving society an active role in leisure planning (II, $p < .001$).

Turning to within family differences we find that students express a greater affinity for leisure than their parents (I, $p < .001$). They also are less work oriented (V, $p < .001$), and are more likely to define themselves through leisure (III, $p < .001$). On both of these dimensions, the mother takes a middle position, significantly different from both student and father (Duncan tests, $p < .05$). To phrase this finding differently: on both of these dimensions, the students position tends to be closer to that of the mother than that of the father. On the other hand, it is the mother who is most for leisure planning (II, $p < .026$) and the father who is least (Duncan test, $p < .01$), with the student in a non-significant middle position.

An inspection of significant two-way interactions indicates that family differences are further accentuated for LU subjects compared to CCNY subjects, for dimension III ($p < .055$; Table 4a), with LU fathers being quite extreme in the degree of self-definition through work rather than leisure. For dimension II, we now see that the female students are much like their mothers, i.e., in favor of leisure planning, while the male students are more like their fathers, i.e., not in favor ($p < .028$;

Insert Table 4 about here

Table 4b). Differences in affinity for leisure are now seen to be primarily a function of differences between male students and their parents, rather than female students and their parents ($p < .059$; Table 4c). An inspection of the respective means for CCNY and LU (Table 4d) shows that this trend holds up within each college. It is the male student that tends to be different from the parent rather than the female student. A further inspection showed that this trend also holds up for dimensions III and V, more so for LU than CCNY (although non-significantly).

The next type of analyses addressed itself to within-family similarities. For example, do fathers who are high on a certain leisure attitude have sons who are also high on this dimension. The method of analysis used were correlations, determined separately for each college, and for male and female students (Table 5). The relationships found were generally

Insert Table 5 about here

low: of 48 coefficients computed, only five were significant at $p < .01$ and three at $p < .05$. Of these, four were accounted for by similarities between mother and father. Only dimension V showed significant relationships ($p < .01$) between students and parents, and these did not hold up consistently for all subgroups.

Discussion

Let us first turn to some findings that are obvious, yet worth mentioning. Leisure attitudes, in our society, are not the same for all people. Whether we attribute the differences found to the colleges studied, to social class differences related to these colleges, to geographical regions, or to any of a thousand possible causes, is of importance in further understanding these findings. It is equally important, however, for us to take cognizance of the existence of these differences, no matter how they originate, when we become involved with such issues as education for leisure or leisure counseling. It may be wise in such instances to establish baselines of leisure attitudes before embarking on any change effort.

How could we account for the generally more positive leisure attitudes of the CCNY sample? Some of the present findings are in contradiction to previous ones. For example, level of education tends to be positively related to affinity for leisure (dimension I), and negatively to work versus vacation desired (dimension V) (Neulinger, 1974). Yet the LU sample, generally higher in education, shows an opposite trend here. Only dimension III is in line with previous findings, both in terms of ecuation and income. The greater proportion of Protestants and fewer "none" or "other" in the LU sample would, according to previous findings, contribute to their greater work orientation (dimension V). If one were to speculate

as to further causes one might think of such factors as urban/rural, foreign born/native American, and degree of alienation. Note also that CCNY subjects are not really that positive about leisure; rather, LU subjects tend to be quite negative in their outlook.

Our data clearly reveal a "generation gap" on three of the four dimensions investigated (Dimension I, III, and V). The fact that parent-child correlations are relatively low would support a historical explanation rather than a developmental one, at least to the degree of parental influence. The most puzzling finding is that the generation differences are primarly accounted for by the male students rather than the female ones for dimension I, and by the male students only, at LU, for dimension V (resulting in the significant triple interaction). Can we conclude from this that the new Leisure Ethic is more likely to be accepted by males rather than females? Could it be that for females the desire for sex-equality is linked to an emphasis on the job, thus counteracting the desire for leisure? The fact that females (both students and mothers) are more in favor of leisure planning suggests a greater awareness among females for control by governement in planning of any kind, to alleviate sex discrimination.

We shall not speculate at this point on the rather low degree of similarity between parent/child attitudes. Further analyses of sets with high degree of similarity versus those with low degree, to be carried out at a later date, may lead to some insights in that respect.

In summary, this study constitutes an exploration in a much neglected area of study, namely the relationship of leisure attitudes of parent and child. We hope that this study might stimulate a much more extensive effort, with a larger sample and more in depth analyses. Such a study could contribute greatly to our understanding of where we are and where we are going in regard to leisure in our post-industrial society.

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Table 1

Background Characteristics of Subject Sets

at The City College and Lehigh University

	City College			Lehigh University		
Variable	Student	Mother	Father	Student	Mother	Father
Sex						
Male	31 (53)		59 (100)	69 (70)		99 (100)
Female	28 (47)	59 (100)		30 (30)	99 (100)	
Age (menas)	20.4	48.5	52.4	19.0	46.6	49.2
Religion						
Protestant	6 (10)	7 (12)	5 (9)	35 (36)	44 (45)	41 (42)
Catholic	8 (14)	14 (24)	12 (21)	25 (26)	28 (29)	24 (24)
Jewish	31 (53)	34 (59)	32 (56)	26 (27)	24 (24)	24 (24)
Other	4 (7)	1 (2)	2 (3)	4 (4)	2 (2)	3 (3)
None	9 (16)	2 (3)	6 (11)	8 (8)	0 (0)	6 (6)
Race						
White	49 (84)	52 (90)	53 (90)	97 (98)	96 (98)	96 (98)
Black	4 (7)	4 (7)	4 (7)	2 (2)	2 (2)	2 (2)
Oriental	2 (3)	2 (3)	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Other	3 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Country of Birth						
United States	56 (95)	37 (64)	39 (66)	99 (100)	95 (96)	90 (92)
Other	3 (5)	21 (36)	20 (34)	0 (0)	4 (4)	8 (8)

Table 1, continued

Variable	City College Student	City College Mother	City College Father	Lehigh University Student	Lehigh University Mother	Lehigh University Father
Education						
11 yrs or less	0 (0)	14 (24)	12 (19)	0 (0)	5 (5)	4 (4)
12 yrs	2 (3)	25 (43)	22 (37)	28 (28)	33 (33)	14 (14)
13-15 yrs	52 (88)	12 (21)	11 (19)	70 (71)	25 (25)	16 (16)
16 yrs	2 (3)	3 (5)	8 (14)	1 (1)	28 (28)	40 (40)
17 yrs or more	3 (5)	4 (7)	6 (10)	0 (0)	8 (8)	25 (25)
Family Size (means)	2.7	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	2.9
Income						
Under $9,000	15 (27)	11 (20)	11 (20)	6 (6)	3 (3)	2 (2)
$9001-11,000	7 (13)	8 (15)	8 (14)	2 (2)	3 (3)	1 (1)
11001-13,000	3 (5)	4 (7)	5 (9)	4 (4)	1 (1)	2 (2)
13001-15,000	10 (18)	6 (11)	7 (12)	4 (4)	4 (4)	5 (5)
15001-20,000	10 (18)	13 (24)	12 (21)	17 (18)	17 (18)	17 (17)
20,000 +	10 (18)	12 (22)	15 (26)	59 (64)	66 (70)	72 (73)
Occupation						
Professional		1 (2)	4 (8)		11 (11)	13 (13)
Business-Sales		2 (4)	11 (22)		2 (2)	32 (32)
Business-Service		1 (2)	7 (14)		1 (1)	18 (18)
Public Service		1 (2)	5 (10)		2 (2)	5 (5)
Clerical		15 (30)	1 (2)		17 (17)	3 (3)
Trades		1 (2)	18 (35)		3 (3)	10 (10)

Table 1, continued

Variable	City College Student	City College Mother	City College Father	Lehigh University Student	Lehigh University Mother	Lehigh University Father
Occupation (cont.)						
Creative		0 (0)	0 (0)		0 (0)	1 (1)
Student/ housewife	58 (100)	28 (56)	4 (8)	99 (100)	60 (61)	13 (13)
Miscellaneous		1 (2)	1 (2)		3 (3)	4 (4)
Marital Status						
Single	54 (92)	0 (0)	0 (0)	99 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Married	4 (7)	58 (98)	58 (98)	0 (0)	97 (99)	98 (100)
Separated/ Divorced	1 (2)	1 (2)	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)

[a]Numbers in parentheses are percentages

Table 2

Analyses of Variance of four Leisure Attitude Dimensions

by College, Family (Set), and Sex of Student

Source	d.f.	Affinity for leisure(I) M.S.	F	p	Society's role in leisure planning (II) M.S.	F	p	Self-definition through leisure or work (III) M.S.	F	p	Amount of work or vacation desired (V) M.S.	F	p
College (C)	1	1.564	6.18	.013	2.765	15.95	.001	1.133	6.35	.012	2.163	14.35	.001
Family (Set) (F)	2	2.676	10.57	.001	.635	3.66	.026	4.696	26.33	.001	1.987	13.19	.001
Sex(of Student) (S)	1	1.115	4.41	.036	.100	.57	-	.699	3.92	.048	.463	3.07	-
C x F	2	.116	.46	-*	.102	.59	-	.522	2.92	.055	.066	.44	-
C x S	1	1.027	4.06	.045	.175	1.01	-	.052	.29	-	.130	.87	-
F x S	2	.719	2.84	.059	.622	3.59	.028	.029	.16	-	.205	1.36	-
C x F x S	2	.088	.35	-	.145	.84	-	.139	.78	-	.437	2.90	.056

* $p > .05$

Table 3

Mean Leisure Attitude Scores, by College, Family (Set), and Sex of Student

Variable		(I) Affinity for Leisure	Society's role in leisure planning (II)	Self-definition through leisure or work (III)	Amount of work or vacation desired (V)
College:	CCNY	-.01	.09	.04	-.03
	LU	-.13	-.06	-.06	.11
		F=6.18, p<.013	F=15.95, p<.001	F=6.35, p<.012	F=14.35, p<.001
Family (Set):	Student	.07	-.00	.14	-.06
	Mother	-.16	.06	.01	.07
	Father	-.15	-.07	-.20	.17
		F=10.57, p<.001	F=3.66, p<.026	F=26.33, p<.001	F=13.19, p<.001
Sex of Student:	Male	-.05	-.03	.00	.05
	Female	-.13	.03	-.06	.09
		F=4.41, p<.036	F=0.57, p = n.s.	F=3.92, p<.048	F=3.07, p = n.s.

Table 4

Mean Leisure Attitude Scores for

Significant Two-Way Interactions

A.

Self-definition
through leisure or work (III)

Family (Set):	College: CCNY	College: LU	
Student	.15	.14	.14
Mother	.04	-.02	.01
Father	-.05	-.29	-.20
	.04	-.06	

B.

Society's role in
Leisure planning (II)

Family (Set):	Sex of Student: Male	Sex of Student: Female	
Student	-.07	.11	-.00
Mother	.04	.09	.06
Father	-.05	-.11	-.07
	-.03	.03	

C.

Affinity for leisure (I)

Family (Set):	Sex of Student: Male	Sex of Student: Female	
Student	.16	-.09	.07
Mother	-.15	-.19	-.16
Father	-.17	-.12	-.15
	-.05	-.13	

D.

Affinity for leisure (I)

Family (Set):	CCNY: Sex of Student: Male	CCNY: Sex of Student: Female	LU: Sex of Student: Male	LU: Sex of Student: Female
Student	.16	.04	.16	-.20
Mother	-.11	-.02	-.17	-.35
Father	-.09	-.02	-.20	-.22

Table 5

Similarities of Leisure Attitudes Within Families

(Correlation Coefficients)[a]

		I Affinity for Leisure			II Society's Role in Leisure Planning			III Self-definition through Leisure or Work			V Amount of Work or Vaction desired		
		S/M	S/F	M/F	S/M	S/F	M/F	S/M	S/F	M/F	S/M	S/F	M/F
CCNY	Male (N=31)	14	04	28	24	07	08	-19	15	07	13	05	41*
	Female (N=28)	12	09	20	04	15	16	-27	-21	34	48**	17	36
LU	Male (N=70)	17	23	33**	10	08	10	11	28*	-00	33**	38**	62*
	Female (N=29)	18	17	39*	-03	23	-05	08	04	08	-05	18	-00

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

[a] decimal points have been omitted